

Washington's Pacific Coast
MSP Actions List
July 9, 2014

The MSP actions list describes the next level of detail for the goals and objectives of Marine Spatial Planning on Washington's Pacific Coast. The actions list describes information and analyses the state will incorporate in the general content of the marine spatial plan (MSP) or in the activities that the state will pursue as part of the process for developing the plan. The list does not include implementation details such as specific methods used.

The term "significant adverse impact" as used below is meant to be the same as it is used in the context of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C) and its rules (WAC 197-11).¹ This law also prescribes the approach to identifying mitigation measures.

Overarching Goal: To ensure a resilient and healthy marine ecosystem on Washington's coast that supports sustainable economic, recreational, and cultural opportunities for coastal communities, visitors and future generations.

Goal 1: Protect and preserve existing sustainable uses to ensure economic vibrancy and resource access for coastal communities.

Objective 1: Protect and preserve healthy existing natural resource- based economic activity on the Washington Coast.

- Better understand, define and document all existing marine activities taking place in the study area (commercial, recreational, cultural, ecological) through scientific research and traditional knowledge research. Document context for existing uses and current and future trends of existing uses, including information on present conflicts and potential future conflicts for existing uses.
- Assess economic contributions of existing marine uses to the local and state economy.
- Identify and assess indicators of economic health.
- Following existing laws protect and preserve existing uses by first avoiding and then minimizing significant adverse impacts from potential future activities, including impacts on aquaculture, recreation, tourism, navigation, air quality, and recreational, commercial, and tribal fishing. Identify policies and recommended actions that enable the implementation of the plan.
- Involve individuals and organizations representing existing uses in planning process such as documenting current and future trends of existing uses, reviewing data and maps of their use, understanding potential impacts and evaluating scenarios and plan recommendations.

Goal 2: Maintain maritime coastal communities from now into perpetuity.

Objective 2: Sustain diverse traditional uses and experiences to ensure continuity of WA's coastal identity, culture, and high quality of life.

¹ See Revised Code of Washington 43.21C.031; and Washington Administrative Code for definitions of "impact" WAC 197-11-752 and "significant" WAC 197-11-794, and "scope", including types of "impacts" WAC 197-11-792.

- Understand culturally important uses of the marine environment, including documenting areas and uses of historical and cultural significance and current visual resources.
- Provide recommendations for uses that protect and enhance the aesthetic quality of marine environment, maritime activities, marine culture and sense of place.
- Document vulnerability of coastal communities to coastal hazards as they relate to proposed future activities.
- Identify and assess indicators of social well-being within coastal communities.

Goal 3: Ensure that our marine ecosystem is preserved for future generations.

Objective 3: Foster healthy and resilient marine ecosystem functions, biodiversity and habitats.

- Understand current status of the natural resources, ecosystem conditions, and impacts of natural variability and natural stressors on the marine ecosystem over the short and long-term. Where possible, document information on ecosystem services and values.
- Understand the implications of various human activities to the marine ecosystem including documenting species and habitats that face higher potential risk or impact from proposed activities.
- Identify and assess areas of ecological importance or particular sensitivity.
- Identify and assess ecological indicators of ecosystem health on Washington's Coast.
- Following existing laws seek to avoid first and then minimize adverse environmental impacts, with special protection provided for the marine life and resources of the Columbia River, Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor estuaries, and coastal areas of Olympic National Park.

Goal 4: Develop an integrated decision making process which supports proactive, adaptive and efficient spatial planning.

Objective 4: Develop a locally supported and collaborative process that is coordinated with existing authorities for aligning management decisions.

- Synthesize information on climate change and predicted impacts to marine resources and existing uses in the study area. Address how climate change may influence plan scenarios and potential impacts of new uses.
- Engage local, state, federal and tribal governments in all phases of the marine spatial planning process to ensure relevant management information and requirements are integrated into the process. The use or activity must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
- Coordinate with neighboring states and provinces to share technical information across all sectors, enhance management of coastal ecosystems.
- Recommend approaches for improving the efficiency of the permitting process, where and if appropriate.
- Involve individuals and organizations representing existing uses and proposed new uses as well as individuals working elsewhere on similar issues in all phases of the planning process.

- Describe the management and implementation framework, including existing state laws, policies and regulations and how they address existing and proposed uses. The plan will articulate a strategy for ongoing interagency communication, adaptation, implementation and review of the Marine Spatial Plan, including aligning MSP with other state management plans and goals and incorporating it into state plans and processes.
- Provide opportunities for public engagement and input throughout the planning process including public education, workshops and meetings. Identify barriers to participation and work with local stakeholders to address and reduce barriers to public participation. Document comments and provide responses, as appropriate.
- Engage scientific experts in review of data and methods. Develop data standards for data collection and analysis.
- Use best available science and information throughout the planning process and drafting of the plan. Provide a common information base to assist management decisions, including through the use of Geographic Information Systems.

Goal 5: Encourage economic development that recognizes the aspirations of local communities and protects coastal resources.

Objective 5: Enhance sustainable economic opportunities to achieve a resilient economy and improved quality of life.

- Understand potential new uses and their potential benefits and potential significant adverse impacts on existing uses and the environment. Evaluate direct, indirect and cumulative impacts in environmental review documents for the plan.
- Develop coastal decision-making tools, analyses & recommendations to determine appropriate and compatible roles for future activities within the study area, including siting of offshore renewable energy, new locations for dredge disposal or aquaculture, and other potential new activities such as mining and bioextraction.
- Identify appropriate mitigation measures to address significant adverse impacts posed by proposed future uses of Washington's coastal waters. Develop mitigation measures in accordance with state laws and regulations.

